

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9592

INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

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UNCLAS SAN JOSE 1007

3.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CS

SUBJECT: AGENDA OF PRESIDENT'S MEETING IN PANAMA MARCH 22

1. ON MARCH 9, LA NACION PUBLISHED THE REPORTED AGENDA OF THE MEETING TO BE HELD IN PANAMA MARCH 22-23 OF THE CHIEFS OF STATE OF PANAMA, COLOMBIA, VENEZUELA, AND COSTA RICA. THE ARTICLE DESCRIBED THE MEETING AS A CONTINUATION OF WHAT WAS BEGUN IN PUERTO ORDAZ - "SHIRT SLEEVES MEETINGS WITHOUT TEDIOUS CEREMONY".

2. THE MOST IMPORTANT ITEMS ON THE AGENDA WILL REPORTEDLY INCLUDE THE CREATION OF SELA, REFORMS OF THE OAS CHARTER, AND THE LIFTING OF THE OAS SANCTIONS AGAINST CUBA. SELA, TO WHICH COSTA RICA HAS NOT GIVEN ITS PUBLIC SUPPORT YET, WILL BE DISCUSSED AS AN ALL-LATIN ORGANIZATION TO GIVE "NUDGES" TO THE OAS AND TO ELEVATE LATIN NATIONALISM. (IN A SEPARATE ARTICLE OF 11 MARCH, LA NACION REPORTED THAT FONMINNFACIO HAS BEEN CITED AS A CANDIDATE TO HEAD SELA). THE LEADERS WILL ALSO DISCUSS CHARTER REFORMS OF THE OAS IN ORDER TO ARRIVE AT A CONSENSUS BEFORE THE NEXT

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OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY. THE ARTICLE NOTED THAT CHANGING

THE SEAT OF THE OAS WILL BE DISCUSSED BUT THAT IT IS
NOT AN "URGENT" ITEM ON THE AGENDA.

3. IN REGARD TO CUBA, LA NACION STATED THAT THE FOUR
CHIEFS OF STATE WILL SEEK A NEW METHOD IN THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY FOR LIFTING THE OAS SANCTIONS, A METHOD BY WHICH
A VOTE WILL BE TAKEN TO RATIFY" THE 1964 DECISION.
IF THE 2/3 MAJORITY DOES NOT RATIFY THE DECISION, THE
SANCTIONS WILL BE ANNULLED. THE NEW IDEA WAS DESCRIBED
AS "ENTERING
THROUGH THE KITCHEN INSTEAD OF THE FRONT
DOOR".

4. THE U.S. TRADE ACT AND THE PROPOSED CA/CARIBBEAN MERCHANT
FLEET WERE ALSO MENTIONED AS AGENDA ITEMS. HOWEVER, THE
REPORT DESCRIBED THE FLEET AS ALREADY "A FACT" AND THE

TRADE ACT AS ALREADY BEING OPPOSED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE FOUR CHIEFS
OF STATE.

5. FINALLY, PANAMA WILL REPORTEDLY BRIEF THE OTHER CHIEFS
OF STATE ON THE PROGRESS OF CANAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE
U.S. AND "OTHER BILATERAL ISSUES" WILL BE DISCUSSED.
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